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CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Over 36L cyber security breaches since 2019

A whopping 36.29 lakh cyber security incidents were reported since the start of 2019 till the end of last month. The number of cyber security incidents tracked by Indian Computer Emergency Response Team rose from 3.94 lakh in 2019 to 11.58 lakh and 14.02 lakh in 2020 and 2021, respectively, Union Minister of State for Home Ajay Kumar Mishra told Lok Sabha. In 2022, there have been 6.74 lakh cyber security incidents till June-end.

SPARKS FLY AT ALL-PARTY MEET ON LANKA CRISIS

Govt rapped for drawing parallel with states

RICHA SHARMA @ New Delhi

S Jaishankar

An all-party meeting called by the Centre on Tuesday to discuss the Sri Lanka crisis turned confrontational as the government tried to draw parallels between economic crisis in the island state and the poor fiscal situation in Opposition-ruled states. Led by Tamil Nadu, MPs from other states hit back at the Centre.

The meeting was addressed by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar who highlighted the economic crisis as the key reason behind political turmoil, adding the culture of freebies had impacted Lanka's fiscal health.

During the presentation by Union economic affairs secretary Ajay Seth on Lanka's economic woes, several Opposition-ruled states, including Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh were called out for spending more than their earnings and their poor debt-to-GDP ratio.

"TN was the first to push back asking government to not use this forum for such a discussion. TN was supported by Telangana and Andhra," Keshava Rao (TRS) told this newspaper. He said the Opposition asked the Centre not to pick on states as India's own debt-to-GDP ratio is around 59% compared to less than 50% a couple of years ago.

Other parties like the Trinamool, AAP and Congress also attacked the Centre. P V Midhun Reddy (YSRC) said the Centre should not compare states with another country; if comparison has to be drawn, it should be between two countries. Congress MP from Tamil Nadu Manickam Tagore said, "The Centre showed many Opposition-ruled states in bad light after which leaders from all the major Opposition parties told the Centre to not attack states."

Jaishankar said it was natural to worry about the spillover of the crisis, but termed it "misinformed comparison" as some people said a similar situation could arise in India.

RANIL FACES TOUGH FIGHT

Sri Lankan Prez polls today; Oppn leader Premadasa tactically pulls out of the race

Supports ruling party SLPP's rebel Dullas Alahapperuma so as to defeat PM and acting president Ranil Wickremesinghe

Their deal: Alahapperuma Prez; Premadasa PM and SJB MP Harsha da Silva finance minister in unity govt | P12

Massive irregularities in 43 sub-registrars' offices

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

SURPRISE visits by 10 teams of Karnataka Lokayukta sleuths for four days have unearthed shocking irregularities and mal-administration in 43 sub-registrars offices in Bengaluru. Most of the irregularities are common across all the places raided.

Touts collect commission ranging from Rs 10,000 to 20,000 for each property in the city, Rs 40,000 to 1 lakh in panchayat limits, which is more than the total amount of the stamp fee, registration and scanning charges.

It is difficult to differentiate between officials and touts since the middlemen act as officials to execute the job. Sub-registrars and staffers neither wear identity cards nor mark attendance. Names and vigilance awareness boards are not displayed, closed circuit TV (CCTV) cameras are not installed and the server (Kavery Property Registration Software) is down most of the time, causing inconvenience in registration of documents.

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NEET

RACKET BUSTED, 8 HELD

In multiple raids on Monday, the CBI arrested eight accused for impersonating candidates to write the exam. "Each aspirant used to give around Rs 20 lakh for getting a secure seat out of which Rs 4 to 5 lakh was given to solver," said a CBI source | P10

Bescom app down, consumers in shock

BANSY KALAPPA @ Bengaluru

THE Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (Bescom) is flooded with complaints from consumers who are not able to pay their bills online. Reason, the Bescom online payment app has not been working for the past eight days, putting thousands of consumers, both domestic and commercial, into hardship.

Power consumers - S R Kandige, P Diwakar and Chander Iyer - all based out of Bengaluru told *The New Indian Express* that for the past 10 to 15 years they have been paying their power bills online regularly without any hitch, but this time when they log in to pay the bills, the bill amount does not get displayed on the screen. Kandige said, "It just shows '0' amount".

Bescom General Manager (CR) Nagaraj S R said, "We will look into the matter and sort it out in one or two days."

Bescom GM (IT) Venkatesh and team who have been reportedly working on it for about a week refused to speak to the media.

CONTINUED ON: P2

Indians to tap Arctic to know Himalayan melt

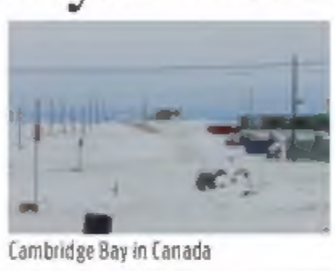
BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

PLANS are afoot to send the first Indian team of researchers to the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) located in Canada's Cambridge Bay, Nunavut, to study the impact of climate change on glacial melt. The studies and findings are planned to be subsequently utilised to better understand the impact of climate change on glacial melting in the Himalayas.

The CHARS is in a place called Kitikmeot hamlet, whose location provides good access to all parts of the Canadian Arctic for studies of this nature.

Dr Krishnan K P, Scientist at National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR), Goa, who will be among the scientists on the planned expedition, told *The New Indian Express* that this will be the first time a team of Indian researchers will be going to CHARS.

CONTINUED ON: P7



Cambridge Bay in Canada

EXPRESS READ

Shiradi Ghat road to be one-way for now

Bengaluru: Following frequent landslides on the Shiradi Ghat stretch on Bengaluru-Mangaluru Road, the state government is working on a temporary alternative one-way route for vehicles coming towards Bengaluru | P7

EXPRESS INTAKE

Class 10 student in the dock for bomb threat mail | P2

I wear khadi, not kavi, want to be CM, says Shivakumar | P4

Cybercriminals siphon off Rs 99K from actor-chef | P5

Four arrested for kidnapping city student | P5

JAB-O-METER TAKE YOUR SHOT

July 18 **25,41,392 doses**
July 19 **23,89,774 doses**
TOTAL: 2,00,30,04,577

NATIONWIDE	JULY 19	UNTIL
Fresh cases	16,935	15,528
Recoveries	16,089	10,83
Deaths	51	25

KARNATAKA	JULY 19	UNTIL
Fresh cases	1,309	1,351
Recoveries	997	1,214
Deaths	8	8